

Indiana African Americans and Smoking



Tobacco Prevention
and Cessation

The number of Hoosiers smoking has declined significantly over the last decade, but smoking rates have not dropped across all populations equally. Tobacco companies have spent billions targeting African Americans with marketing for menthol cigarette products.¹ African American adults are also less likely to be protected from secondhand smoke exposure than white adults. Because of this environment, adults who are Black or African American smoke at higher rates than white or Hispanic adults, and more African Americans are living with and dying from smoking-related diseases than other racial and ethnic groups.²

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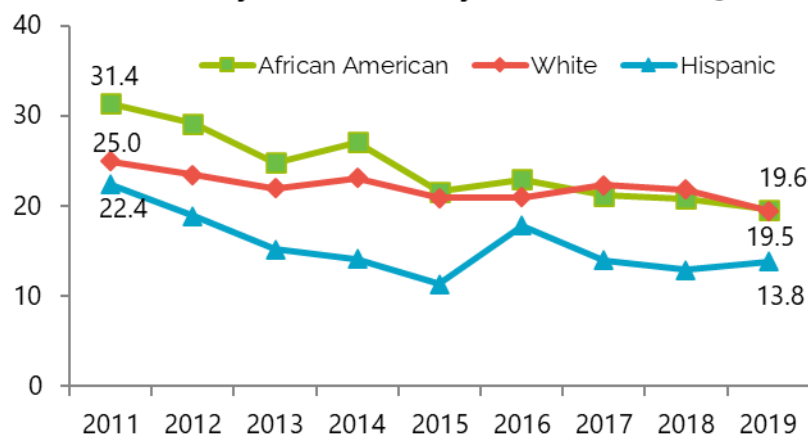
Smoking Prevalence among Hoosier African Americans

- In 2019, nearly 1 in 5 African American adults in Indiana (19.6%) were current smokers, a significant decline from 31.4% in 2011.³
- Historically, smoking prevalence among African Americans in Indiana has been higher than among whites. In 2019, smoking prevalence among African American adults (19.6%) was comparable to the smoking rate among white adults (19.5%).³

Fast Facts

- Nearly **1 in 5** Hoosier African American adults (19.6%) were current smokers in 2019.
- The majority of African American adults who smoke in Indiana (89.7%) report smoking menthol cigarettes.
- Over **6 in 10** Hoosier African Americans who smoke intend to quit smoking.
- Over **7 in 10** Hoosier African Americans who smoke tried to quit in the past year.
- Nationwide, white adults who do not smoke are more protected from secondhand smoke than African Americans who do not smoke. African Americans who do not smoke are exposed to secondhand smoke at twice the rate as white adults who do not smoke.
- African Americans are more likely to die from smoking-related diseases than whites.
- Smoking increases the risk of heart disease, cancer, and stroke – the three leading causes of death among African Americans.

Percent of Indiana Adults Who Currently Smoke by Race/Ethnicity, BRFSS 2011-2019



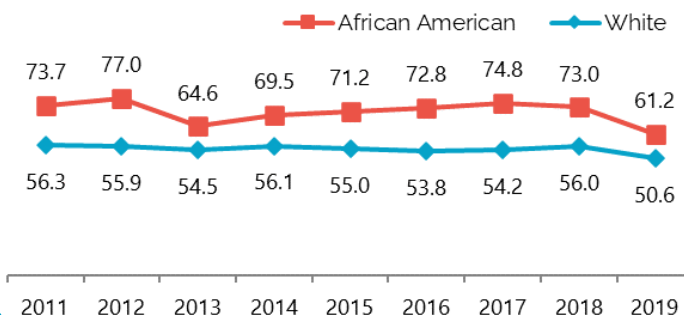
Menthol Cigarette Use Among African Americans

- Historically, tobacco companies have spent billions in targeted marketing towards African Americans for their menthol cigarette products.¹
- Menthol makes cigarette smoke easier to inhale and may facilitate absorption of the harmful chemicals in cigarettes into the body. Additionally, use of menthol cigarettes is likely associated with increased dependence and lower success in quitting smoking.¹
- In 2019, 9 out of 10 (89.7%) of Hoosier African American adults who smoke reported smoking menthol cigarettes, compared with 3 out of 10 (35.6%) of white smokers.⁴
- In a 2011 report to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee estimated that by 2020, menthol in cigarettes will have caused over 460,000 African Americans to start smoking and led to 4,700 excess deaths among African Americans nationwide.⁵

Smoking Cessation among African Americans

- In 2019, 61% of Hoosier African Americans who smoke reported attempting to quit at least once in the past year.³ Historically, rates of quit attempts have been higher among African Americans than whites in Indiana.³
- While African Americans in Indiana continue to make more quit attempts each year, the rate of **successful quits** (abstinent from smoking for a year) still remains lower than among white adults.
- Additionally, only 50% of African Americans who smoke were advised to quit using tobacco products by a health care provider in 2019, compared to 62% of white adults.⁴

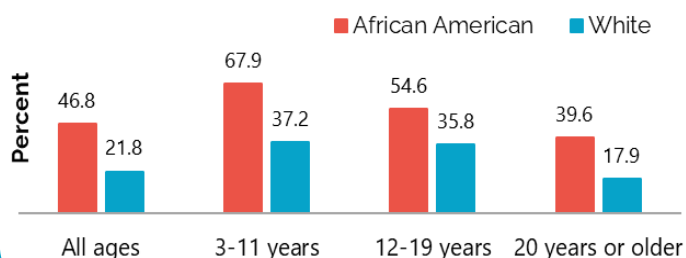
Percentage of smokers who attempted to quit in the last 12 months, by race, BRFSS 2011-2019



Secondhand Smoke and Smoke-free Air

- In 2011-2012, the rate of secondhand smoke exposure among African American nonsmokers nationwide (46.8%) was more than double the rate among whites (21.8%).⁶
- While secondhand smoke exposure rates have declined since 1999-2000, the decline has been smaller among African Americans than whites.⁶
- In 2019, 70.7% of Hoosier African American adults believed that breathing secondhand smoke is very harmful compared to only 64% of white Hoosiers.⁴
- The majority of Hoosier African Americans (71.1%) report having smoke-free homes, but non-smokers (84.1%) are more likely to live in a smoke-free home than current smokers (29.2%). In comparison more white Hoosier adults that smoke live in smoke-free homes (46%). This rate has increased over the last few years among white adults who smoke, while decreasing among African American adults that smoke.⁴

Prevalence of secondhand smoke exposure among African American and White non-smokers, U.S. 2011-2012⁷



Conclusions

While smoking rates have declined among African Americans Hoosiers in recent years, they continue to be unfairly targeted by tobacco industry marketing and exposed to secondhand smoke more than other Hoosiers, putting them at increased risk for poor health outcomes.

What Can You Do?

- Join a [local tobacco control coalition](#) in your community.
- If you or someone you know needs to quit tobacco, call 1-800-Quit-Now or visit QuitNowIndiana.com for free support.

For additional information on Indiana tobacco prevention and cessation: in.gov/isdh/tpc

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs – 2014. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. African Americans and Tobacco Use [Internet]. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2016 Aug 17 [cited 2016 Sep 13]. Available from <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/african-americans/index.htm>.
3. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2011-2019.
4. Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey, 2019.
5. Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee. Menthol cigarettes and public health: review of scientific evidence and recommendations. 2011 Jul 21 [cited 2016 Sep 13]. Available from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/TobaccoProductsScientificAdvisoryCommittee/UCM269697>.
6. Homa DM et al. Vital signs: disparities in nonsmokers' exposure to secondhand smoke – United States, 1999-2012. MMWR 2015; 64(4): 103-108. Available from http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6404a7.htm?s_cid=mm6404a7_w.



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